



REQUESTS FOR PROPOSALS

Overcoming Barriers to Housing Affordability

Research Theme

The Lincoln Institute of Land Policy (“Lincoln Institute”) invites proposals for studies on the barriers to implementing housing strategies at the scale needed to address the housing affordability crisis, and strategies to overcome those barriers.

Background

The United States faces a serious housing affordability crisis. In 2016, nearly half of all renters paid more than 30 percent of their income on rent, and more than a quarter paid at least 50 percent of their income on rent. While there is some debate about the primary factors responsible for the affordability crisis, there is significant evidence and consensus on the set of policy changes needed. Housing strategies that are balanced and comprehensive, aiming to increase both the number of dedicated affordable units and the overall housing supply, are most likely to succeed. Despite this consensus, few places have succeeded in implementing these policy changes at the scale needed to effectively address the housing crisis.

The Lincoln Institute aims to better understand the barriers to implementing housing strategies at the necessary scale, and specific strategies to overcome those barriers.

Balanced and comprehensive housing strategies encompass a wide set of policies: reforming zoning and permitting to allow higher density housing, reduce development costs, and shorten project timelines; increasing subsidies and the number of dedicated affordable housing units; preserving existing affordable housing; protecting against displacement; and more. Proposals can consider barriers, and strategies to overcome those barriers, to implementing any or all of these policies at scale. We are particularly interested in learning more about how multipronged housing strategies, which include several policies working in tandem, can more effectively promote affordability and build community support for housing reforms. Proposals should focus on housing policies that can be implemented by state and/or local governments in the United States, without any change in federal policies. We are primarily interested in strategies to promote affordability in hot housing markets.

A non-exhaustive list of potential topics of interest include:

- Strategies to build broad coalitions made up of disparate interests to support housing reforms;
- Implementing state laws and processes that incentivize local policy changes and/or promote housing affordability goals (e.g. state tax credit programs, Qualified Allocation Plans, etc.);
- Streamlining the planning and development process and/or reforming associated public engagement processes to better reflect community preferences;
- Developing tools that can better project the impact of new development and housing policy changes on rents, housing prices, displacement, neighborhood aesthetics, etc.

Final project deliverables may include literature reviews, case studies, or research papers:

- Literature reviews should summarize what is known and unknown, identify places that have adopted or are considering significant policy changes, and could also draw upon interviews with experts and practitioners.
- Case studies might describe places that successfully implemented major housing reforms and what enabled their success, and/or places that developed good housing plans but failed to implement them and what prevented successful implementation.

- Research papers should have a clearly defined research question, a theoretical framework to be tested, a strong methodology, and (if necessary) a strategy for data collection.

Proposal Evaluation

The Lincoln Institute will evaluate proposals based on four equally weighted criteria:

- Relevance of the project to the RFP's theme of overcoming barriers to housing affordability
- Quality of the proposed approach and sources of data
- Capacity and expertise of the team and relevant analytical experience
- Potential impact of the project to facilitate successful implementation of housing strategies

Award Amount

Awards for selected research papers and literature reviews will be \$5,000 to \$10,000. Awards for selected case studies will be \$3,000 to \$5,000.

The studies produced from the selected proposals will be considered for inclusion on the Lincoln Institute's website. Individuals selected through the RFP process may also be invited to present completed projects through webinars, conferences, and other Lincoln Institute events.

RFP Schedule

Application deadline: September 30, 2020

Notification of accepted proposals: October 21, 2020

First draft: January 15, 2021

Final draft: April 16, 2021

Submission Guidelines

This RFP is open to any individual or agency, practitioner or academic, interested in helping the Lincoln Institute to expand its knowledge on this topic.

Proposals should include:

- 1) **Cover Page:** The cover page must include the title of the project and the contact information of applicant(s), including address, phone number, and email.
- 2) **Project Abstract:** The abstract must convey the core topic and proposed contribution of the research. It should clearly convey the context, purpose, relevance, and methods of the proposed research topic (300 words maximum).
- 3) **Project Description:** Describe the research objective(s), purpose, relevance, and methods of the proposed research topic. It should describe how the proposed work will build off existing research and identify any new contributions (2,000 words maximum).
- 4) **Workplan:** Briefly define the specific tasks or activities required to accomplish the project, with a projected schedule for completing each phase of the project.
- 5) **Biography:** Please include a brief biography and resume/CV for the primary researcher and any other team members (3 pages maximum).
- 6) **Budget:** Provide an estimate of funding needed to complete the project.

RFP Submissions

The proposal must be written in English, using Microsoft Word software, and submitted by email. Format the application for printing on 8.5 x 11-inch (letter-size) paper. The application may be single- or double-spaced, but each section must not exceed the maximum word count, as described above under the Submission Guidelines.

Email the entire application as a single-document attachment to fellowships@lincolninst.edu by September 30, 2020 at 11:59 PM Eastern Time.

Questions about this RFP

For questions regarding this request for proposals, please send an email to fellowships@lincolninst.edu.

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About the Lincoln Institute of Land Policy

The Lincoln Institute of Land Policy seeks to improve quality of life through the effective use, taxation, and stewardship of land. A nonprofit private operating foundation whose origins date to 1946, the Lincoln Institute researches and recommends creative approaches to land as a solution to economic, social, and environmental challenges. Through education, training, publications, and events, we integrate theory and practice to inform public policy decisions worldwide.